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STATEMENT OF CARDINAL ROGER ETCHEGARAY
PRESIDENT OF THE PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR JUSTICE AND PEACE ON LEAVING DILI - EAST TIMOR

It was a great joy for me to be able to accept the invitation of His Excellency, Bishop Belo to visit the diocese of Dili. I have been here in these days on a pastoral visit, first of all to bring the blessing and encouragement of the Holy Father to the to all the members of the Catholic community. In the spirit of harmony which should exist everywhere between members of differ ent faiths and religions, I extend my greetings also to the members of all other religious communities.

Some foreign news sources attributed to my visit the task of examining the possible division of the diocese of Dili. I wish to make clear that I have received no mission of this nature.

As President of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, I wish to reaffirm my conviction that there can be no justice without peace and that there can be no peace without justice. Respect for human rights is the only way in which justice and peace can be brought to live together. If these principles had always been respected in history, many lives would have been saved, much suffering and many tears would have been spared everywhere.

I am aware that an international political problem exists concerning East Timor. It is not my competence to enter into that question. As a friend, however, I wish to say to all those involved: believe in the power of dialogue, of dialogue among yourselves and of dialogue outside the country. And I express complete encouragement, as the Pope himself has done on numerous occasions, for all the efforts of dialogue at present in course. Dialogue is difficult: it requires courage, patience and determination. Dialogue requires mutual respect and understanding by all the parts. It requires giving a space to all, especially to young people, to express their concerns. The way of dialogue is the most mature and the most human way, and it is the most effective way for producing solutions which satisfy all concerned.

In such a dialogue there must be space for the realization of the legitimate aspirations of the Timorese people to see their special cultural and religious identity recognized. With the Pope, I wish today to launch an appeal for courage to all friends and servant of peace.

+Roger,Card.Etchegaray

Dili, 27 February 1996

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Dili, 27 February 1996

Comentario:
Esta visita do Sr.Cardeal Etchegaray foi realmente reconfortante, na medida em que representa a atencao da Igreja Universal ao sofrimento do povo timorense, ao Bispo, aos Padres e Religiosos. Sentimos tambem junto de nos, todos os amigos que trabalham para a Paz, pela Justica - As Comissoes da Justica e Paz de todo o Mundo, bem como as outras organizazoes como a Caritas,etc.

O grande abraco que o Cardeal deu ao Mons.Carlos Filipe no Domi ngo a tarde na Catedral, foi historico para nos, pois foi um grande sinal de reconhecimento da Igreja pelos trabalhos em prol riscos a propria vida, procurou levar a cabo nesta martir terra.
No fim do Encontro da Catedral, houve jovens preparados pelos indonesios que comecaram a atirar pedras contra os jovens no adro da Catedral, mas nao houve problemas de certa gravidade. O que ficou claro que sao os indonesios que costumam preparar os dis turbios para capturar os jovens. Disto foram testemunhas o Rev.Vigario Geral e Paroco da Catedral, baseado na testemunha ocular do Rev.P.Domingos Sequeira. Os dois foram no dia seguinte pedir esclarecimentos ao Chefe da Policia da Provincia/Polwil.

A visita ao Cemiterio de Santa Cruz, onde rezou expressamente para as vitimas de 12 de Novembro, foi tambem um grande sinal para a Resistencia do Povo Timorense.

Rough Translation!

This visit by Cardinal Etchegaray was a real comfort, in the way in which he represented the attention of the Universal Church to the suffering of the East Timorese people, to the Bishop, the Priests and the Religious. We felt also that all the people working for Justice and Peace, the Justice and Peace commissions of all the world, as well as all the other organisations such as Caritas, were joined with us.

The big embrace extended to Monsignor Belo by the Cardinal on Sunday afternoon in the Catherdral was historic for us, because it was a huge sign of recognition, on the part of the church, of the work and the growing risks of our own lives in seeking to raise our heads in this martyred country. At the end of the ceremony in the Cathedral, there were youths recruited by the Indonesians who began to throw stones at the youths in the Cathedral yard, but there were no serious problems. What was clear was that it was the Indonesians who are in the habit of orchestrating disturbances so as to be able to capture the youth. Witnesses of this were the Vicar General and parish priest of the Cathedral, based on eye witness reports of Fr. Domingos Sequeira. The two went, the following day to ask for an explanation from the Chief of Police of the province at Polwil.

The visit to the Santa Cruz cemetery, where he prayed particularly for the victims of the 12 November (1991), was equally a great signal for the resistance of the East Timorese People.